

**Date:** June 29, 2000

**Bill Number:** House Bill 5740 (Enrolled)

**Sponsor:** Representative Gerald VanWoerkom

**Position:** Support

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**Purpose:** House Bill 5740 would amend section 1233 of the *Revised School Code* to increase the pool of individuals who would qualify to provide school guidance counseling.

**Major Provisions:**

< The bill would allow an individual to be employed as a school counselor if the individual meets one or more of the following:

- Holds a valid teaching certificate with a school counseling endorsement.
- Holds a master's degree in guidance counseling after completion of an approved school counselor education program. The program content areas should include guidance services, individual and group analysis, guidance information, counseling theory and practice, supervised experience, and evaluation. The individual must successfully complete the state guidance counselor test and be recommended by an approved school counselor education program to provide services as a school counselor.
- Has at least five years successful experience in school counseling in another state within the past seven years and successfully completes the state guidance counselor test.

< A district that employs a school counselor that does not hold a valid teaching certificate must comply with the criminal history check requirements under sections 1230 and 1230a of the *Revised School Code*.

**Arguments For:**

< The bill would provide individuals in-state or out-of-state that do not have a teaching certificate to become employed as school counselors, increasing the pool of school counselors currently available to schools.

**Arguments Against:**

< A school counselor's responsibilities may often include classroom instruction and reduce the current professional standard.

**Suggested Amendments:** None.

**Fiscal Impact to State:** None

**Fiscal Impact to Local Unit of Government:** None

**Administrative Rules Requirement:** The Administrative Code Rule governing *Endorsement of Teachers as Counselors* may need to be amended [R 390.1302].

**Departments Impacted:** Department of Education.

**Background Information:** In April 1999, the State Board of Education voted to approve an experimental *Preliminary School Counselor Endorsement* program. The program addresses the growing shortage of certified/endorsed school counselors by addressing the difficulty many trainees have in satisfying the 600-hour internship requirement.

The *Preliminary School Counselor Endorsement* calls for the creation of a two-tiered system for the endorsement of school counselors. At the first tier, individuals would be eligible for a *Preliminary School Counselor Endorsement* upon completion of a minimum of 34 graduate-level semester credit hours in a school counselor training program. They would not, at that time, be granted a master's degree. Instead they would be able to use that endorsement to secure a position as a school counselor. The preliminary endorsement would be valid for a period of not more than three years, during which time the individual would need to complete all degree program requirements or lose his or her endorsement. An applicant for the preliminary employment authorization must possess a valid teaching certificate. To date, the Department has issued 24 preliminary employment authorizations.